

The President Announces Commonsense Steps to Keep Guns Out of the Wrong Hands

Written by The White House

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WASHINGTON, DC - President Obama spoke on the additional steps he's taking to reduce gun violence and make our communities safer at the White House on January 5, 2016.

Watch his remarks on [YouTube](#) or below.

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Here are some highlights:



"In Dr. King's words, we need to feel the 'fierce urgency of now.' Because people are dying. And the constant excuses for inaction no longer do, no longer suffice. That's why we're here today. Not to debate the last mass shooting, but to do something to try to prevent the next one."

"How did we get here? How did we get to the place where people think requiring a comprehensive background check means taking away people's guns? Each time this comes up, we are fed the excuse that commonsense reforms like background checks might not have stopped the last massacre, or the one before that, or the one before that, so why bother trying. I reject that thinking."

"So let me outline what we're going to be doing. Number one, anybody in the business of selling firearms must get a license and conduct background checks, or be subject to criminal prosecutions ... We're also expanding background checks to cover violent criminals who try to buy some of the most dangerous firearms by hiding behind trusts and corporations and various cutouts ... And these steps will actually lead to a smoother process for law-abiding gun owners, a smoother process for responsible gun dealers, a stronger process for protecting the public

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from dangerous people."

"All of us should be able to work together to find a balance that declares the rest of our rights are also important -- Second Amendment rights are important, but there are other rights that we care about as well. And we have to be able to balance them. Because our right to worship freely and safely -- that right was denied to Christians in Charleston, South Carolina. And that was denied Jews in Kansas City. And that was denied Muslims in Chapel Hill, and Sikhs in Oak Creek. They had rights, too.

Our right to peaceful assembly -- that right was robbed from moviegoers in Aurora and Lafayette. Our unalienable right to life, and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness -- those rights were stripped from college students in Blacksburg and Santa Barbara, and from high schoolers at Columbine, and from first-graders in Newtown. First-graders. And from every family who never imagined that their loved one would be taken from our lives by a bullet from a gun."

[Read the full remarks.](#)